

Senior Service College Fellowship Civilian Research Project

THE ART OF PEACE

BY

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USAWC CIVILIAN RESEARCH PROJECT

THE ART OF PEACE

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ABSTRACT

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THE ART OF PEACE

“For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill.

To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.” Sun Tzu¹

Introduction

One hundred victories in war do little to accomplish peace. Peace is something that the military fights for, but trains little for. For peace to be achieved following conflict, it is normally the result of building a nation from the ashes of war. Books are filled with many lessons on the art of war studied by professionals responsible for keeping the United States secure. There are surprisingly few lessons studied on how to win peace, and how to build a nation.

The term nation-building invokes many negative connotations and is often viewed as wasteful spending on meaningless projects that run counter to the United States' foreign policy objectives. President George W. Bush said on October 11, 2001, *“I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation-building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war.”²*

Despite the negative sentiment towards nation building, the United States is clearly engaged in this task in Afghanistan, as stated in the United States Army's Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency.³ This is not the first time the United States has engaged in nation-building campaigns to build peace after war. Unfortunately, the one lesson America seems to have learned from past nation-building experiences is to never undertake them again.⁴ This is precisely the wrong lesson, as peacebuilding is

necessary to secure the hard fought victory in Afghanistan. Now is the time to learn the right lessons before it is too late.

To accomplish the strategic aim of building a stable Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), the United States should apply the appropriate strategic means. Strategic application of the art of peace through peacebuilding is that means. This paper analyzes three areas that require further development and reflection to educate military leaders in the art of peace and peacebuilding methods that will build a stable and sovereign Afghanistan:

1. **Educating warriors in the art of peace by learning the relevant lessons from history.** Tactical lessons from history develop military leaders capable of applying the art of war. The military education system develops leaders who are able to analyze and disable enemy networks but falls short on developing leaders in the art of peace and the methods required to enable friendly networks. To educate leaders in the art of peace the right lessons from history should be studied equally with the great victories in battle to determine how exactly the peace was won. A counterinsurgency approach executed by leaders trained in the art of war does not provide the means to conduct strategic nation building.⁵ A peacebuilding approach executed by strategic military leaders who are trained in the art of peace will complement counterinsurgency at the local level and will lead to a more stable Afghanistan by applying proper means to solve problems at the roots of the causes.

2. **If you focus on the enemy, you will ignore the threat.** It is necessary to understand the environment and build powerful relationships based on trust and respect. Current military emphasis on threat networks at the tactical level often ignores the strategic threat of a fragile nation imploding from within and possibly becoming a failed state. The political struggle is more decisive than that of battlefield victory. Analyzing human terrain and empowering Afghans to govern themselves at all levels of government will set conditions for development and diplomacy to be effective. A multifaceted approach of peacebuilding at all levels of society and government builds the political foundation that allows for sovereign government capacity building, creating a sustainable and stable government. Analyzing the whole and not just the threat presents opportunities to build a political foundation that can better build peace post conflict or even prevent conflict. Enabling the political network is more decisive than disabling the enemy network.
3. **Build instruments of peace not war.** Top-down programs do not solve deeply rooted issues at the local level. Building a national military is not enough to secure a state; at the same time, holding elections and advising leaders at the strategic level does not create a democratic nation. Peacebuilding from the bottom up will develop a secure sovereign foundation to build a nation.

Before addressing these reasons further, it is necessary to define peacebuilding. The art of peace requires an understanding of peacebuilding. The greatest challenge of

peacebuilding is that there is no universally accepted definition. Former United Nations Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali first defined peacebuilding in 1992 as, “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.”⁶ Since then, the term has been defined by many organizations. Most recently, the term was defined by the United States Institute for Peace.

Originally conceived in the context of post-conflict recovery efforts to promote reconciliation and reconstruction, the term peacebuilding has more recently taken on a broader meaning. It may include providing humanitarian relief, protecting human rights, ensuring security, establishing nonviolent modes of resolving conflicts, fostering reconciliation, providing trauma-healing services, repatriating refugees and resettling internally displaced persons, supporting broad-based education, and aiding in economic reconstruction. As such, it also includes conflict prevention in the sense of preventing the recurrence of violence, as well as conflict management and post-conflict recovery. In a larger sense, peacebuilding involves a transformation toward more manageable, peaceful relationships and governance structures—the long-term process of addressing root causes and effects, reconciling differences, normalizing relations, and building institutions that can manage conflict without resorting to violence.⁷

A more practitioner friendly definition of peacebuilding is the process of enabling a nation-state’s social, political, and economic systems for the purpose of establishing or reestablishing sovereignty and state capacity, resolving conflict and building a

sustainable peace.⁸ These definitions shed light on the necessity for a peacebuilding means to be applied in Afghanistan and why it is necessary to maneuver on human terrain and not just physical terrain.

I

Learning the Relevance from History

Students of war pride themselves as students of history. The same must be true for the student of peace. The lessons from Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, Clausewitz and Lee fill the curriculum of the US Army's education system and certainly add to the development of warriors educated in the art of war. Closer examination of many of the great warriors of the past suggest that a more in depth study is required to learn the strategic lessons in the art of peace. Did the great military leaders also build peace?

Peacebuilding complements military operations by linking military end states with developmental aims. In counterinsurgency operations peacebuilding is essential by indentifying the "how to build" at the local level beyond what counterinsurgency defines in the "Build" phase of the "Clear-Hold-Build" method of executing counterinsurgency doctrine.⁹ Peacebuilding methods go beyond what the military counterinsurgency approach identifies and could lead many to deduce that the military is not the right force to conduct these types of operations. It is wrong to conclude that peacebuilding is not a military mission. History shows us that it is a military mission to build peace, enable friendly networks, while simultaneously destroying and disabling enemy networks. Two examples from U.S. history illustrate this point and should be part of the required study within the military education system. The first is the political genius of General George Washington and the second is the political genius of General Ulysses S. Grant.

Lessons from Washington and Grant

The military exploits of these two famous Americans are well known and widely used in the military professional development education system. Military professionals are required to study the brilliant battlefield victories of Washington and Grant, but the most relevant lessons are not learned from their superior military exploits but rather from their ability to build political consensus toward building peace. Simply put the leaders of the US Army that led and lead forces in Iraq and Afghanistan deployed with a tactical foundation based on the art of war from the study of the brilliant maneuvers of the great generals like Generals Washington and Grant at Trenton and Vicksburg.¹⁰ The real lessons of the art of peace require the study of the political maneuvering of statesmen Washington and Grant. Lessons learned not from the maneuvers on the battlefield of generals, but from the diplomacy of the statesmen to build not destroy.

General Washington fought more than the numerically superior British forces during the Revolutionary war. He also fought a tough political battle for the support of the fledging nation he was attempting to lead to freedom. His skill building political backing was as masterful as his brilliant battlefield maneuvers. General Washington understood more than the most of the need to have support from the population as well as the colonial governors. His personal correspondence and his care to manage collateral damage and looting of civilian property clearly show he knew how to build as equally as he knew how to destroy.¹¹

The same example is seen by comparing the actions of General Grant with that of President Grant. The Vicksburg campaign led by General Grant is still a part of the required study by military professionals at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.¹² The Vicksburg

Campaign is an excellent study for students of the art of war, yet it offers little relevance in the development of the student of the art of peace. Grant's genius is seen throughout the war but his most decisive actions of holding the union together are seen away from the battlefields. After the surrender of the Confederacy, General Grant refused to enter the city of Richmond on his way back to Washington, D.C., stating that his presence "might lead to demonstrations which would only wound the feelings of the residents, and we ought not to do anything at such a time which would add to their sorrow."¹³

Grant's actions following the devastating conflict of the US Civil War are perhaps the most relevant lessons from history for today's strategic leaders in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the General of the Army, Secretary of War and then as President, Grant helped reconstruct the Southern States and reform the Union. The struggle to rebuild the nation almost sacrificed everything the war was fought for. Beginning with the assassination of President Lincoln and followed by corruption, political compromising, marginalizing the freedom of liberated slaves and violent groups' rising in the south. These incidents and many more required the skillful application of peacebuilding from the strategic leaders in the country led by President Grant.¹⁴

The military seems to have learned the wrong lessons from the US Civil War and the reconstruction focusing solely on the art of war; studying the great battles with little reflection on the political rebuilding following the war. The battle of Gettysburg is still studied at the US Army War College, a school that is designed to train military leaders on how to think strategically.¹⁵ The three-day battle of Gettysburg offers little lessons that are relevant to the modern struggle the military faces in Afghanistan and Iraq, yet the quagmire the US faced during the Southern Reconstruction does and should be

studied in further detail by those responsible for writing the current strategy for the US Armed Forces.

An education system that focuses on battlefield victories risks developing a culture within the US Military that is comfortable and skilled in disabling enemy networks and achieving victory on the battlefield. The lack of focus on military diplomacy and peacebuilding methods from history is the reason that the military does not understand the effectiveness and strategic importance of enabling friendly networks. A quick search of the US Army's lessons learned database at the Combined Arms Center illustrates this point and is an indicator that the US Army might be learning the art of war from history instead of learning the art of peace. Military Review is the military professional journal that publishes articles written by military professionals for military professionals. Publishing in this journal is highly encouraged for military officers during their professional education. What is published in this journal provides an insight into what military professionals see as relevant to modern operations. A search on the Combined Arms Center Military Review database that serves as the depository for professional articles written by members of the military rendered the following results as seen below.

Articles written about General Ulysses S. Grant and his military exploits during the US Civil War were 999, articles written about reconstruction in the Southern States following the US Civil War were two. A similar search for Lawrence of Arabia rendered 216 articles while there were only 13 articles about or reference the nation building exploits of Gertrude Bell.¹⁶

The Right Lessons

There are further examples found in not only what lessons the military chooses to study but also how they interpret the lessons from history. The US Army is comfortable identifying the lessons learned from the victors of past battles when closer analysis paints a very different picture in practice. A search of professional articles again revealed this disparity. There are 548 articles written about Alexander the Great while only 31 written about Darius the Great.¹⁷ An example of why this is important is seen in how the US Army executes professional development using historical staff rides.

There are many lessons to learn from history on the art of war and military professionals are drawn eagerly to these lessons often ignoring the lessons of the art of peace. Detailed study of historical battles known as a staff ride is a method the US Army uses to develop young leaders.¹⁸ Even when deployed to Iraq, professional development does not stop. In 2009, the leaders of the Multi-National Division North conducted a combined staff ride on the Battle of Gaugamela where in 331 BC Alexander the Great defeated Darius, the King of Persia. The staff ride was brilliantly executed including the senior leadership of the US Army Division, senior leaders of the Iraqi Security Forces as well as various Iraqi academics.¹⁹ This event not only offered an on the ground analysis of the battle it also served as a team building event to allow members of different armed forces to learn more about each other.

What were the lessons this staff ride offered to this group of professional military leaders? The staff ride focused mainly on comparing the two leaders whose armies met on the field that day, Darius the Great, King of Persia and Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia.

Where the lessons and comparisons of these two leaders the correct ones? Further review of the program illustrates that there is another point of view that the lessons from this battle could offer and it should be analyzed if the battle of Gaugamela is to serve a relevant purpose for modern leaders studying the art of peace.

The staff ride compared the armies of Darius and Alexander in three categories: leadership, agile mindset and training. This comparison offered some interesting observations but possibly led to incomplete analysis and simplistic conclusions of the relevance of this battle and lessons that could have been learned. The field comparison offered insights into the genius of Alexander and the rigidity of Darius and quickly led to the conclusion that Alexander demonstrated leadership by commanding from the front, and with his ability to adapt to conditions by creating and exploiting opportunities with his well-trained professional force defeated the much larger Persian force on the fields of Gaugamela. Darius on the other hand commanded from behind where he could be protected and fled from the battlefield when it appeared that his life would be threatened. Darius showed no agility by using one set of battle plans and brute offensive force. His force though trained was not loyal, was made up of mostly mercenaries, peasants and conscripts all fighting for reasons other than the cause.²⁰

These observations are generally true but what should be alarming is that the US leadership quickly associated itself with Alexander rather than with Darius. This perspective hides the real lessons from this battle as they apply to the US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. By switching the association of the United States Military, from Alexander to that of Darius offers some interesting insights and commonalities of how

the US operated in Iraq to how Darius operated in Iraq. Analyzing the insurgency in Iraq through the Alexander lens is equally insightful.

The leadership of Darius could be equally associated with how the US was commanding forces in Iraq. Darius commanded from a position of protection, much like the US's large bases in Iraq surrounded by concrete barriers with video feeds of the battle displayed on the protection of an isolated command cell far from the danger. The US forces patrolled in heavily armored vehicles while using brute force to push a set battle plan. The forces composing the US effort in Iraq also offers similarities to that of Darius. There were many contracted security forces used for missions to protect, convoy escort and base security; soldiers paid to accomplish a specific task. The US Army initiated 'stop loss'– and 'stop move'–keeping forces in the Army whose enlistments were expired – not equal to the conscripts of Darius' Army – but a similarity that should be reviewed further if the US Army truly wants to learn from history.

The most alarming similarities come from the comparison of the insurgency in Iraq to the soldiers in Alexander's Army. Insurgents fought out front and shared hardships with the forces dedicated to the insurgent cause. The insurgent showed incredible ability to adapt to conditions that the US Army presented using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) against armored vehicles and then anti-armor grenades to attack the improved armored vehicles that could not be destroyed by IEDs. The insurgent force was not made up of conscripts but rather with people dedicated to the cause of the insurgency willing to attack a much larger force with a small one. The insurgent actions ran counter to conventional military thinking and they should be given the innovative credit that they deserve.

By switching the lens from which the perspectives were drawn, a new perspective emerges that should be analyzed further and serve as a reminder that there is no lesson in history that can be blindly applied to a modern problem. History offers lessons that will assist in developing future leaders but care must be applied to ensure that the leaders derive useful lessons so that historical reflection can be instructive. The importance of seeing the similarities of the US Army in Iraq and Darius the Great is an uncomfortable, but necessary exercise if leaders are to find an effective strategy for today.

Future military leaders can use history to see the right lessons in war and peace, however, these developing leaders tend to learn lessons only in the art of war, and not in the art of peace. Throughout the rigorous professional education of a military officer, many theories of the art of war and the evolution of warfare are studied with the academic rigor equal to many Ivy League universities. The US Army prides itself on the education of future leaders going to great lengths to challenge and build future strategic thinkers who are skilled in the art of war. Below are two examples of how to approach the battle of Gaugamela. Note the differences in the alternative table.

Table 1: Battle of Gaugamela²¹

	Leadership	Agile Mind Set	Training
Alexander the Great	Out in front Trusted by his subordinates Shared hardships	Creative and visionary Flexible formations Seizes opportunity	Professional force Experienced in battle Loyal to Leadership
Darius	Behind protective line Flees from battle	One set of battle plans Brute offensive force Waits to see	Mercenaries and peasants Conscripted for battle Inexperienced in battle

Table 2: Battle of Gaugamela Viewed from a different perspective²²

	Leadership	Agile Mind Set	Training
<i>Alexander the Great</i> Iraqi Insurgency	Fighting for family For his homeland For his tribe For his religion	Adjust to US tactics Uses Homemade Explosives IEDs RKG3 adapted to defeat MRAP Fights close	Decentralized chain of command Empowered to act
<i>Darius</i> US Military	Feels invincible Commands from the rear Protected by concrete walls Reactive	Slow to change Uses old tactics Old formations Reacts with firepower Causes collateral damage by using conventional methods	Centralized standards Stop loss / stop move policy to fill ranks Uses contracted security forces Overconfident

Peacebuilding does not require a major change to current military doctrinal approaches or organizations, but only to the methods that are applied. The military should include locals in developing solutions that go beyond security concerns and take on economic, governmental, and political development at the local level.

To build peace in Afghanistan, military forces should embrace the task of enabling the political, social, economic, and government development at the local level

by using Afghans. In Afghanistan, this task is normally the responsibility of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), which is aligned with the provincial government and is not near the root of the problem. To build from the bottom up, organizations must assist leaders at the local level. This task is beyond the capacity of the PRT but the team's experts could be divided among military units who live and operate at the local level on a daily basis. A population that is enabled to develop solutions using their own social networks and culturally acceptable methods will view themselves as sovereign. Moreover, the task of the U.S. Soldiers in the local environment is to discern who to enable and who to marginalize with the appropriate use of measured force in the process. This approach will result in local villages that will stop waiting for national promises to trickle down and instead, will weave a strong societal fabric that is the foundation for national stability.

II

If You Focus on the Enemy, You Ignore the Threat

Learning the Political Network as well as the Enemy Network

Focusing on the enemy ignores the threat.²³ Those familiar with counterinsurgency doctrine and counterinsurgency operations understand this paradox. In Afghanistan, it is important to determine the strategic threat to accomplishing the aim of a sustainable and stable nation-state. If the national government does not have the support of the people, then the strategic threat is the fracturing of this fledgling government, possibly leading to a failed state. In order to accomplish the aim of a stable Afghanistan, the strategic focus should be on what threatens that aim; the loss of popular support is the main threat, not the enemy.

Many enemy networks (Taliban) develop at the local level because local Afghans are outraged by the actions of a foreign military force they view as an occupier. To change that perception held by Afghans, it is necessary to understand how the population views the presence of a foreign military force as well as the actions of their own government. As the well-known author Nir Rosen stated, referring to the U.S. military in Iraq, "The fact that we [the United States] stayed overshadowed the liberty we brought."²⁴ This perception certainly applies to the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan and provides an important lesson that should help the U.S. to understand the true threat.

If the priority is to find, fix, and finish the enemy and not to build local government capacity by enabling the local political network, then the methods are out of balance and the strategic threat goes unaddressed. Disabling enemy networks will never achieve the strategic developmental aim. For development to take place military actions must enable sovereign institutions to build government capacity and set conditions for stability.

Building a government that the locals understand and have a constructive relationship with at the local level will directly increase the confidence and support of the populace. This approach enables the host nation populace to solve problems by empowering local leaders to develop solutions. Peacebuilding is the method that prioritizes effort and resources towards the strategic threat and builds the conditions for accomplishing the strategic aim.

The struggle in Afghanistan requires that military forces apply tactical and strategic methods simultaneously. Many methods for nation building require a

sequential approach. One framework, according to Johanna Mendelson Forman, is that nation building consists of four main activities conducted in the following sequence: (1) security, (2) governance and participation, (3) social and economic wellbeing, and (4) justice and reconciliation.²⁵ This sequential approach calls for a secure environment before governance can take root but often ignores the influence local governance has on security.

This misperception leads to an overemphasis on military solutions for establishing security and often creates the opposite effect. Counterinsurgency doctrine and application accounts for the appropriate levels of force; and how that the more force is used the less effective it is.²⁶ Though clearly defined in doctrine the art of applying paradoxical methods for effect is extremely difficult. By placing greater priority on enabling friendly networks than disabling enemy networks removes the paradox from the doctrine and provides clarity to what needs to be analyzed and built. Friendly networks are human networks of political, social and cultural significance that when enabled offer the potential to develop toward sovereign solutions. Enabling these networks early will establish the sovereign foundation to allow for strategic development and diplomacy. This is not something to be transitioned to the other US Governmental agencies, or handed over to the next phase along a linear model but rather a military task to build sovereignty at the ground level.

Military maneuvering through societal networks, what many military professionals refer to as human terrain requires a detailed understanding of the environment and of the political network. This requires military intelligence collection to be focused on enabling operations to understand the human mapping and to determine the second

and third order effects of enabling these networks. Reflection on the US intervention illustrates the importance of this step. Intelligence efforts identified the threat network to be disabled, the “Deck of 55” playing cards identifying the leadership of Saddam Hussein to be killed or captured. Was there analysis on the friendly network to be enabled? Why was there no “Deck of 55” playing cards identifying the friendly network to be empowered?²⁷

Analysis of society (human terrain) is essential to identify the friendly political network and who within that network holds legitimate authority with the people. This enabling friendly network approach would prevent the US forces from empowering the wrong people for the sake of short-term security while risking long term political stability. If done correctly, careful analysis and intelligence collection on the friendly networks will illuminate a path to build local sovereignty. If done incorrectly, the wrong people are placed in power and given legitimacy from the US and this will set conditions favorable for the insurgency.

Closer examination of whom the US placed in power in Afghanistan illustrates that the US did not understand the friendly political network before deciding to enable it. Many local leaders in Afghanistan were empowered by the US Military forces to accomplish a short-term security goal.²⁸

The application of peacebuilding methods should work toward identifying leaders, who if enabled will build the sovereignty of Afghanistan, not simply subordinate themselves to the US’s direction and desires. Analysis of friendly networks requires a collaborative approach from all stakeholders. A unilateral analysis of a complex environment blinds the US military to the complexity of the environment. To gain a true

understanding of the environment, analysis must include the local population or to be more precise, an analysis based upon a positive relationship with the local population. Decisions made without including the population are nothing more than a gamble. One Iraqi, one Afghan included in the analysis process is worth far more than highly trained US military professionals.²⁹

In order to establish the foundation of peace the military must be certain that early decisions to empower for short-term security will not run counter to the long-term sovereignty of the nation. Not knowing the human terrain blinds those attempting to build stability and often leads to strategic mistakes that are hard to correct once they are enabled. In Afghanistan, this is seen in the people the US backed and empowered in the national government. Many of the Afghans that the US empowered were nothing more than opportunists who were seeking to profit in the power vacuum created by the intervention. Others possibly had ties to terrorist networks that the US was attempting to disable.³⁰

The most important step is to learn the environment, but not just the enemy networks. It is vital to understand the friendly networks, the legitimate leaders and build relationships with these leaders, which will be politically acceptable by the populace that they govern.

Once the environment is analyzed and understood the next step is to build relationships by embracing the culture. The guidance from a US Brigade Commander while serving in Iraq provided below offers some simple lessons for this approach:

It is extremely important for us to understand that our relationships did not transition from the old provincial government to the new one. We must build

relationships with the new leadership at all levels. Some basic principles still apply:

- Stay for lunch; do not be pressed for time. If asked to stay, stay. By doing so, you will honor their customs and traditions.
- Take your boots off before entering an Iraqi home. Respect your hosts and the culture by practicing their customs.
- Take Friday off, not Sunday.
- To earn trust and confidence you must first extend trust and confidence.

These are all things we know, but the new leaders do not yet know us. We must start over. Your experience will allow us to establish relationships faster but, make no mistake, we must start over.³¹

Further guidance about the impact of the security agreement in Iraq and enabling good governance explains the necessity for military leaders to understand and embrace their role in enabling the political environment.

The Security Agreement:

Wars do not end when we want. They do not end in a decisive military victory but rather with a human struggle to find an acceptable existence. They end through a political struggle that builds a nation from the ashes of war. The nation that has emerged in Iraq is an Iraqi nation but not necessarily, one the Iraqis themselves recognize as a path toward prosperity and stability. The path

must continue to be cleared by the tireless efforts of Soldiers who understand the struggles along the road toward peace. The Security Agreement has lit the path that we must travel together.

The struggles we face now are a result of the success we have achieved. To complete the journey we must continue along the path towards stability. We must build capacity and enable all lines of effort towards acceptable sustainable Iraqi systems.

Iraqi self-reliance is far more complex than what our simplistic measures of success have led us to believe. We are in a struggle for peace. If this struggle is one for unity fought along political lines in accordance with Iraqi rule of law then an Iraqi nation will be the product. If this struggle divides, more than it unifies, then it will once again be fought by an insurgency or civil war. If we do not win the peace, we will certainly breed war.

We have turned no corner closer to ending this struggle—but we are further down the road toward peace. The road ahead of us will be just as demanding as the one we have traveled. It could even be harder.

Governance:

The provincial council is off to a great start and taking on many issues. We must continue to help them connect with the Qadas by synchronizing priorities and project approval. Every project must be in line with a district or the provincial council priority. I encourage you and your satellite PRT to coach your council members towards more effective and efficient solutions but remember to listen to

all sides of the argument. Good governance requires compromise and often for political reasons.

We must all continue to enable the Iraqi plan.

We won the fight, now we must win the peace.³²

The key to peacebuilding through the art of peace is to understand, that the priority should not be to disable the enemy but rather to enable the people. Analysis of the environment must build understanding beyond the threat networks. The military must understand the political environment and maneuver to empower the right leaders who will build sovereignty. This approach will establish the foundation that will allow for effective development and diplomacy from all the stakeholders to better build a sovereign Afghanistan.

III

Build Instruments of Peace not War

Building a national military will not ensure a secure state. Building instruments of war at the expense of building instruments of peace will not achieve the strategic aim. The art of war approach runs the risk of blinding senior military leaders to the ineffectiveness of building national level militaries. The art of peace approach sheds light on the required sovereign methods to build a nation. Again, the military needs to learn the right lessons from history. These lessons come from recent US History in Vietnam and US involvement in Iraq. The US strategy in Afghanistan suggests that these lessons were not learned or they have been ignored.

Building National Armies

Reflection on America's experience in Vietnam indicates that building an Army in the image of the United States is not always the right answer. The military the United States built in South Vietnam was too conventional and was not the right force for the localized threat.³³ The United States and its allies have certainly taken measures to build an Afghan Army capable of fighting a counterinsurgency. Yet, a key question remains, has the U.S. built the right force to address local security concerns? Experts' opinions vary on when the Afghan National Security Forces will be able to assume responsibility for securing their country and where the money will come from to sustain this force.³⁴ In the end, no one is certain if a national force will be enough to address local security concerns. Also of concern is whether the national armed forces and police will identify themselves as a national institution of Afghanistan or if they will revert to their local or tribal identity. If the root causes of local security concerns are not

addressed and dysfunctional elements reduced, the Afghan military that the United States has helped build could be undermined.

The US strategy to secure the state by building a national army did not work well in Iraq. The strategy in Iraq was to build the Iraqi Army, train the army and then transition security enforcement to the army. The strategy was to build security capacity through the Iraqi Army and reduce US troop presence as Iraqi forces assumed areas of responsibility.³⁵ During the fall of 2006, responsibility for securing large areas of key provinces in Northern Iraq was transitioned to the Iraqi Army Divisions. The violence of the civil war was too much for the fledging army to handle. Iraqi forces could not identify themselves as a national institution. The leaders and the soldiers were not loyal to a nation making the possibility of a national army constructed from the various ethnic and religious groups impossible. The forces were poorly equipped, under manned and under paid. All of these challenges were enormous and would have been difficult to overcome in a secure environment, but for Iraq in 2006, they were a recipe for the failed strategy of transitioning control to the Iraqi Security Forces.³⁶

What followed the failed strategy in Iraq was widely known as “The Surge” this strategy was much more than merely more forces; it was a completely new approach. US forces were repositioned from large bases into population areas, local security forces were developed and paid to secure their own neighborhoods and more priority was placed on training Iraqi Police. The other significant change in 2006 – 2007 was the emergence of the Sunni Awakening and the reconciliation activities incorporated into the strategy. This local approach led to vast improvements in security and set conditions for political reconciliation. There is much more research required before the

true factors are understood but it is clear is that building a national army for internal defense did not work in Iraq and these reasons should be analyzed further to assist in improving the security situation in Afghanistan.

Disabling Strategy Failing

Reflections on the US experience in Afghanistan developed from the art of war approach led to America's military focus by prioritizing disabling operations instead of enabling operations. This approach led to numerous strategic decisions that have not produced stability in Afghanistan. First, after the initial intervention the US had the Al Qaeda (AQ) on the run fleeing from Afghanistan. When there were no longer any large groups of AQ left in Afghanistan the US began to wage a broader war against the Taliban and other Afghan networks such as the Gulbuddin Hekmatyer and Jalaluddin Haqqani.³⁷ Second, the decision to build an Afghan National Army in the image of the US Military pulled resources needed to build local security, develop police forces and build local governance capacity. What Afghanistan required at the time was good police forces that were loyal to local leaders. The Afghan Army was built at the expense of local security.³⁸ The third mistake was to broaden the war to fight against Afghanistan's poppy production.³⁹ Countering drugs has proven to be a difficult, if not an impossible mission for developed countries to undertake, yet alone for a failed state attempting to build after many years of war.

The above strategies reflect a disable approach developed by students of the art of war. A peacebuilding or enabling approach applied to the same issues simultaneously with the required disabling security measures could have produced much different results. Working with the Afghans from the start could have presented

opportunities to work with all Afghans instead of isolating the entire networks by labeling them as threat networks. Negotiating a peace by working with all Afghans would have marginalized the threat networks that now seem to be gaining the support of the population.

Security approaches from the local level up by building the local police prior to building a national level army would have included legitimate local leaders to not only build security but also government capacity. Local security approaches also develop local political environment as well as allowing the opportunity for Afghans to solve local conflicts. Local level security forces would allow for more time for the required national institutions to grow into what the Afghans need to govern. This bottom up approach would have included more Afghans into the security solutions and empowered Afghans to govern at the local level. This would have significantly increased the sentiment of the populace toward their government allowing the Nation of Afghanistan to grow by strengthening the fabric at the local level. When this step is ignored, the population will seek other forms of security and government, thus opening the door to insurgent groups.

Expanding the war to counter drugs was compared to opening a second military front when the current front is far from being decided.⁴⁰ This action expanded the war efforts and pulled numerous resources required to build capacity at the local level. US efforts to destroy drug production in Afghanistan has failed and many experts argue that they benefited the insurgency and criminal elements as well as led to wide spread corruption in the Afghan Government.⁴¹

The drug network in Afghanistan is an enormously complex problem that requires a strong government with the full support of the population in order to effectively counter. Enabling the population, government, agriculture, education and many other institutions are required first, before a disabling approach can be effective against drugs.

Elections

The Afghan people, serving to erode the very confidence the United States was attempting to build, do not see national elections as credible.⁴² Failed elections have left the Afghans cynical of the promises of democracy. As a result, they are left wondering if, or when, they will benefit from this process. Addressing local government and political concerns, by contrast, will build the capacity the populace demands as well as increase the positive regard of the population toward the government.

National level approaches could fail in Afghanistan if they are not augmented with a bottom-up peacebuilding approach to build security and governance at the local level. Peacebuilding creates local governments upon which a stable nation-state can be developed.

Conclusion

After nine years of war, Americans rightly want to know if the United States can win the war in Afghanistan and is it worth the cost we have paid in the lives lost and national treasure spent? Americans asked this same question after the Vietnam War when many of the US Army generals responsible for waging that war felt that it was not worth the cost. According to a survey conducted in 1974 by Douglas Kinnard, more

than 50% of the Army general officers who commanded as generals at various levels in Vietnam thought that the United States should not have participated in combat in Vietnam.⁴³

To avoid a similar post-war assessment today, senior leaders in the military should analyze if the United States is winning the peace instead of asking if they are winning the war. Accomplishment of the strategic aim requires the application of strategic means with an American acceptance of Afghan solutions and expectations. The United States must recognize and tolerate the cultural differences and bias in the push for local leader legitimacy in Afghanistan. It is not too late to win the peace in Afghanistan if peacebuilding is applied as the means toward accomplishing the end.

In Afghanistan, military victory alone is not going to accomplish the strategic aim. To win in Afghanistan, the United States military must learn the art of peace and embrace the daunting task of becoming peacebuilding warriors.

Endnotes

¹ Tzu, Sun, and Griffith, Samuel, B. , *The Art of War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971)

² Fukuyama, Francis, *State Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004) pg 1

³ Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-34, MCWP 3-33.5 Counterinsurgency (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2006) Forward*

⁴ Tierney, Dominic, *How we Fight Crusades, Quagmires and the American Way of War* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 2010) pp 36-37.

⁵ Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-34, MCWP 3-33.5 Counterinsurgency (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2006) chapter 5*

⁶ Report of the Secretary General, *An Agenda for Peace*, January 1992, web site:

<http://www.un.org/docs/SG/agpeace.html> paragraph 26

⁷ The United States Institute for Peace, *Peace Terms, A Glossary of Terms for Conflict Management and Peacebuilding*, (Washington, DC, 2011) page 40 – 41

Additional definition:

Alliance for Peacebuilding; To Build a Sustainable Peace and Security World Wide” Web Site:

<http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/?page=aboutpeacebuilding> Peacebuilding is the set of initiatives by diverse actors in government and civil society to address the root causes of violence and protect civilians before, during, and after violent conflict. Peacebuilders use communication, negotiation, and mediation instead of belligerence and violence to resolve conflicts. Effective peacebuilding is multi-faceted and adapted to each conflict environment. There is no one path to peace, but pathways are available in every conflict environment. Peacebuilders help belligerents

find a path that will enable them to resolve their differences without bloodshed. The ultimate objective of peacebuilding is to reduce and eliminate the frequency and severity of violent conflict.

⁸ Piatt, Walter, Syllabus from SEST 626-01, *Military Peacebuilding Experience Since 9/11*, the definition used in a graduate course I taught at Georgetown University: *The process of enabling a nation-state's social, political, and economic systems for the purpose of re-establishing sovereignty and state capacity, resolving conflict and building a sustainable peace. I see this as the strategic level of counterinsurgency.* There are many definitions for peacebuilding.

⁹ Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-34, MCWP 3-33.5 Counterinsurgency (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2006) chapter 5, page 5-21.*

¹⁰ Piatt, Walter: Taken from my class notes while attending the Command and General Staff College and the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

¹¹ Chadwick, Bruce, *George Washington's War*, (Naperville, Illinois, Sourcebooks, 2004) pp 85-88

¹² Combat Studies Institute at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas offers a staff ride of the Vicksburg Campaign. This staff ride was required for students of The US Army School of Advanced Military Studies when the author attended SAMS in 1998.

¹³ Smith, Jean Edward, *Grant* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster 2001) pp 408-409.

¹⁴ See Smith, Jean Edward, *Grant* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster 2001) chapters 13- - 18 pages 408-572. -409.

See also Tierney, Dominic, *How We Fight*, (New York: Little Brown and Company, 2010) pp 79 – 90.

¹⁵ US Army War College command briefing given to the author in February 2011 at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

¹⁶ Search of the Military Review web site: <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/militaryreview/> conducted by the author during research on peacebuilding and US Military professional development.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Staff Rides are common in the US military and are conducted by first in depth classroom study and reading followed by a visit to the actual battlefield.

¹⁹ MND-North Commanded by then MG Caslen conducted the staff ride using the Deputy Commanding General, then BG Robert Brown, who was serving at the northern command post in Mosul to put the program together.

²⁰ Gaugamela Staff Ride power point hand out with field notes taken by the author.

²¹ Gaugamela Staff Ride power point hand out with field notes taken by the author.

²² Gaugamela Staff Ride power point hand out with field notes taken by the author.

²³ Piatt, Walter, *Bronco 6 Guidance*, Iraq, May 2009

²⁴ Rosin, Nir, *In The Belly of the Green Bird, The Triumph of the Martyrs in Iraq* (New York: Free Press, May 2006) pg 37

²⁵ Fukuyama, Francis, *State Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004) Chapter 9, *Striking Out of Baghdad* pg 199

²⁶ Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-34, MCWP 3-33.5 Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, December 2006) chapter 5, page 1-27

²⁷ Snodgrass, David, *Replacing Saddam*, Research Paper, Naval War College, October 2010, pg 4

²⁸ See Chayes, Sarah, *The Punishment of Virtue*, Sarah argues that the US Military empowered a war lord in Kandahar and in so doing established him as legitimate authority allowing him to continue his corrupt methods further destabilizing the stability the US was working to establish

²⁹ Piatt, Walter, Command guidance given to the brigade staff of 3rd Brigade Combat Team while at the National Training Center in July 2008

³⁰ See Gannon, Kathy, *I is for Infidel*, this book clearly outlines that the US did not understand who they were dealing with after the invasion and placed the wrong people into positions of significant responsibility.

³¹ Piatt, Walter, *Bronco Six Guidance*, May 2009

³² Piatt, Walter, *Bronco Six Guidance*, June 2009

³³ Kinnard, Douglas, *The War Managers* (Annapolis, Naval Institute Press, 1979) pg 95

³⁴ New York Times, *US Plans Vastly Expanded Afghan Security Forces*, March 18, 2009

³⁵ Taken from the authors field notes during his time as the Division Operations Officer for the 25th Infantry Division, the division prepared to deploy to Iraq from 2005 – 2006 and was deployed to Iraq from July 2006 to October 2007. During this time, the division planned for and executed transitions of responsibility to the Iraqi Army. This strategy was overtaken by the violence of the Iraq Civil War and it would then lead to a new strategy of protecting the population with forward US presence and use of the Sons of Iraq.

³⁶ *ibid*

³⁷ Kathy, Gannon, Kathy, *I is for Infidel: From Holy War to Holy Terror : 18 years inside Afghanistan* (New York : Public Affairs, c2005)

I is For Infidel,

³⁸ Author's field notes and observations while serving in Afghanistan from 2001 – 2002 as the Deputy Chief of Staff for JTF Mountain

³⁹ Author's field notes and observations while serving in Paktika, Afghanistan from 2004 – 2005 as the Battalion Commander for 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division

⁴⁰ Author's field notes and observation while serving in Paktika, Afghanistan from 2004 – 2005 as the Battalion Commander for 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division. In a conversation with the Brigade Commander in Khowst Afghanistan, it was my assessment that the drug war in Afghanistan is similar to Hitler's attack in Russia and opening up a second military front when his first front was not yet completed.

⁴¹ There are many articles written on the drug war in Afghanistan. See Feature: NATO, US Deepen Anti-Drug Operations in Afghanistan in Bid to Throttle Taliban at:

http://stopthedrugwar.com/chronicle/2008/oct/17/feature_nato_us_deepen_antidrug

⁴² Rubin, Alison, New York Times, *After Afghan Vote, Complaints of Fraud Service*, September 19 2010

⁴³ Kinnard, Douglas, *The War Managers* (Annapolis, Naval Institute Press, 1979) pg 154

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